

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY  
PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
LAKE ISABELLA  
MARCH 13, 2007

PROGRAM GUIDELINES  
QUESTIONS

1. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 15: Can a public/private partnership be eligible for funding?**
2. Could one or two of the 14 staff be people who could answer questions on leveraging funds?

PROGRAM GUIDELINES  
COMMENTS

1. **In regard to Program Guidelines, Program Areas, page 6, "Provide Increased Opportunities for Tourism and Recreation," 1st bullet: Add "stewardship through" prior to "agriculture".**
2. **In the section about "Reducing natural risks such as wildfires", project examples listed are prior to event, they should also be during and after.** For example: emergency evacuation plans/alternate routes for dead-end canyons; needs of rural hospitals and search and rescue; and amateur radio group capabilities. There is also a need for interoperability with communications.
3. **Projects obviously match people's passions, but want to see specific statement in Program Guidelines: "How does your project positively affect all other program areas?" This should be an evaluation criteria. Want holistic thinking regarding projects. Add that to the Program Guidelines, make projects mutually supportive.**
4. **Regarding Workshop Workbook, question #1: Natural disaster risks should include earthquakes.**

GRANT GUIDELINES  
QUESTIONS

1. Will there be a smaller application and a more streamlined reporting process for grants administered by the Executive Officer {Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs)} under \$50,000?
2. Historic site preservation projects have obstacles with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and private owners. Might we be able to use the grant money to buy property? Will the historical society be able to apply for a one million dollar grant to buy property in order to preserve history?
3. Six million dollars will be distributed equally among the subregions regardless of the quality of projects? What if there aren't enough high

- quality projects to achieve equitable distribution while other good ones are going without funding?
4. Can funds be used in cooperation with federal grants, i.e. as matching funds?
  5. Regarding 501(c)(3) eligibility in current legislation, what can be done to include a 501(c)(6) as an eligible applicant?
  6. **Do 501(c)(3)s need to be incorporated in California to be eligible for grants? Would non-profits outside of California be considered?**
  7. **How is it handled if one organization submits numerous projects under \$50,000 that add up to \$50,000 or more?**
  8. When will the drafts be finalized and when will we be notified that we can apply for grants?
  9. **Projects with ground-disturbing activities – could people apply for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance funding?**
  10. **Do all of the grant funds expire?**
  11. **Are convening services available through grants or just by a simple request?**
  12. **Are you saying SNC would be willing to administer grants as small as \$10,000?**
  13. **Regarding \$10,000 grants: What would be the criteria for, or weighting against, a bundling of five \$10,000 projects to equal \$50,000?**
  14. **Are grants allowable on both public and private lands for planning and implementation? For example, invasive weed projects on private land affect the whole watershed, both on public and private land.**
  15. Are grants available in United States Forest Service (USFS) wilderness areas? Example of a fish barrier in Golden Trout Wilderness Area.
  16. Does flood-proofing of individual homes qualify for grant money?

### GRANT GUIDELINES

#### COMMENTS

1. **Grants aren't a free lunch. All grant applications should be accompanied by letters of support (stakeholders). Regarding Grant Guidelines, Project Proposal and Evaluation, "Cooperation and Community Support," page 7, says to demonstrate community support, but in "Application Process" on page 4 of the Grants Guidelines it says that letters of support are not necessary. People/groups should be held accountable.**
2. **Fire Safe Council (FSC) of Kern Valley comments:**
  - Welcome support for fuel reduction. Spent \$800,000 on it in the last five years. Funding for fuel reduction is a big problem – FSCs are now everywhere so there is lots of competition and not enough money statewide.

- Grant Guidelines are a problem. According to the Grant Guidelines, site improvement projects require tenure (Grant Guidelines page 6, "Land Tenure"). FSCs only get "license to enter" and only after the grant has been awarded; too onerous to get prior. Tenure requirement precludes them applying for funds. This may be a statewide problem, ask other FSCs.
- 3. SOGs ought to be limited. The Grant Guidelines, page 11, say that there is no limit, but also say the Executive Officer is limited to delegate \$50,000, please clarify this. There needs to be more of an explanation of the distinction between Competitive Grants and SOGs. The distinction between Competitive Grants and SOGs should be intent, not dollar amount. The concept of the SOG needs to be more defined.
- 4. SNC should look at putting in ways to measure success of projects.
- 5. Have a concern regarding project sustainability. Taxes will need to be paid beyond three years. Is there ability for SNC to continue to pay?
- 6. For project evaluations the Sierra Nevada Alliance recommends putting together a suite of projects rather than one at a time.
- 7. The lower limit for competitive grants is \$50,000. Concerned because rural projects often don't take that much. The Kern County tourism program is administered through the Board of Trade – suggest that they could also administer grants from SNC.
- 8. The FSC thinks SNC should ask for matching effort as far as what's going to be done, either in kind or in dollars. Maybe ten percent?
- 9. Some Kern County residents' projects are in Tulare County on the North Fork of the Kern River. Some incorporate private forest property. Tulare County seat is in Visalia – far away. Some of this money should be awarded to counties to implement projects because counties are so hard hit financially.
- 10. Regarding the equitable distribution formula: wanted clarification of splits.
- 11. A question on eligibility costs – the eligibility of insurance is not clear. It is often mandatory and a big expense. Would SNC consider that to be eligible?
- 12. A gap analysis was done for the Kern River Valley in September of 2001. It included:
  - An historic properties inventory that recommended prioritizing the importance and implementability of projects.
  - Recommendations to find examples of sky-friendly valley lighting.
 Is money available for these inventories or similar projects?
- 13. With respect to land tenure, there is a parallel between invasive weed control and the FSC process. Invasive weeds along roads are brought in by vehicles or people.

### OTHER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

1. Disappointed that none of the offices are very far south.
2. Recommend setting a regular meeting time (say once a week on Tuesdays) and place for the organizations in the Lake Isabella area to meet with SNC. We don't want to find out about events after the fact.
3. What happens in 3 years relative to SNC funding?
4. 501(c)(6)s can work through 501(c)(3)s as a pass-through or partner. This issue (ineligibility) shouldn't be a hindrance.
5. 501(c)(6) can accept federal funds.
6. Want SNC to know about Bodfish Canyon project along road. Water, human health, and safety project. This project will be submitted.
7. Tulare County absorbs a big impact during winter due to cross traffic problems. In winter, higher parts of Tulare County lose economic advantages due to weather (mountain pass closes). They need to keep the pass open all year, and we need assistance getting cooperation on that from government entities. People drift away due to their inability to get places. Also need assistance with communication badly. Drought/fire is the worst enemy, but earthquakes and terrorism are also concerns.
8. If CEQA/NEPA compliance needs to be done it could put work off for a year.
9. Additional projects can be listed as a result of these workshops?
10. Regarding communication: lack of cell service is a big issue related to safety/health issues. The Ranch (a time share development) has saved several people over the years, lucky to have had phone service. Should talk with cell companies, maybe California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and USFS can let them have land for a cell tower.
11. What does the 2007-2008 SNC budget look like?
12. Do you see SNC board using their political capital to influence this?
13. Assuming that this is popular, equitability is critical! Like the idea of looking at the Sierra as a whole.

### SUBREGIONAL ISSUES RAISED

1. Tourism/recreation
2. Economic development
3. Cultural and historical resources
4. Reduce risk of natural disasters
5. Public lands
6. Lack of cell phone service
7. Winter road closures
8. Invasive weeds